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EXTRACT FROM SPEECH

—OF—

HON. SETH W. BROWN,

REPUBLICAN CONGRESSMAN FROM OHIO,

—IN THE—

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9th, 1901,

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Here is a part of the resolution of Congress, adopted three years ago, relating to Cuba.

That the United States disclaims any disposition or intention to exercise any sovereignty, jurisdiction or control over said islands except for the pacification thereof, and asserts its determination, when that is accomplished, to leave the government and control of the island to its people.

We hear it said now—it is almost common talk—that it was a mistake for our Government to make this disclaimer. Men assert, without any apparent sense of shame, that, while it was well enough for us to go to war for the sake of humanity and in humanity's name, we should have left ourselves free to bring the Cuban people into subjection to us and free to take their island into our keeping and hold it as our property. Deep regret is expressed because of the fact that before the world we pledged ourselves to the people of Cuba that we would not make conquest of their island, but that we would leave it to them. The man who says we should have resorted to this double dealing in April, 1898, now very logically and very naturally goes a step further and says we ought to violate the pledge we then made and take Cuba, whether she wants to come to us or not. What more miserable, more inhuman, more unpatriotic course could be advocated? It is the climax of greed, without one spark of conscience. It is the acme of avarice, without a single redeeming feature. It is the doctrine of a free-booter of the world. It is the code of a pirate of all the seas. [Applause.]

One week ago in this hall gentlemen paid high and

just tribute to the memory of Cushman K. Davis. He was a patriot, a statesman, a humane and noble man. I count this pledge to Cuba, which he moved as an amendment to the intervention resolution, as one of the bravest and best deeds of his life, and as one of the most beautiful leaves in the wreath which now encircles his honored name.

Who is it that now dares to say that we may be false to this pledge? If its author could come back to his place in the Senate, what would he say to such a proposition? No one who knew him can doubt that he would spurn the base suggestion. As his friends would be true to his memory, let them keep the faith which he pledged to an oppressed and persecuted people, and as we all would be true to national and individual honor, let us keep our promise in its strict letter and its perfect spirit. We must keep our honor bright.

I know it is said that a Senator from Colorado [Mr. TELLER] was the author of the pledge which I have read. It is true that he had submitted to the Senate a proposition relating to Cuba which contained substantially the same declaration. But Senator Davis adopted this pledge as his own, changed its language in an important particular, and offered it to the Senate as his proposition, and as his amendment it was agreed to by that body. This is precisely what the *Record* shows.

I believe Cuba will become a part of the domain of the United States. But if we must acquire the island against the will of the people and by an act of ours which breaks this nation's solemn word, if we must secure the island in this way or not at all, then may Cuba remain away from us forever. [Applause.]

When we come to deliberately consider our relation to the Philippine Islands and our duty to their inhabitants, when we come to seriously consider our duty to our own people and to the people of all climes and all future ages,

there is something besides rich soil and its crops, something besides a thousand islands and their immense natural resources, something besides trade, something besides wealth, something besides dominion and power, which must engage our deepest thought.

That these islands add vastly to our national domain and contribute immensely to our material wealth is certain. That the ownership of these islands minister to our pride of possession cannot be disputed. The sun rises on our land earlier and shines on it longer than it ever did before, and we too may boast without great exaggeration that our drumbeat is heard around the world. But is this the best—the best for us? Is this all—all for us? Founded as our nation was, to regard people as worth more than land, shall we now think more of land than we do of people?

If we hold the Philippine Islands perpetually, as we may have good legal right to do, what will be the effect of our action on the people of the United States and their free institutions, and on the people of these islands and their future in the great problems of government and civilization? This is a question, ever recurring, which no thoughtful person can put aside. We may exult in the vast increase of territory and wealth which our prowess in war and our skill in diplomacy have brought to us, and may attempt to persuade ourselves that this is the highest duty of the Republic; but there will be a solemn voice that we will ever hear—a still, small voice that will question and search us, asking us to say, as we will have to answer at the bar of history, whether this is the true end of our being among the nations of the world. [Applause.]

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